

NOAA Physical and Social Science Task Team Meeting
January 4, 2005
10:00 AM to 3:30 PM
SSMC III, Room 3404

Attendees: Richard Fulton, Sandy MacDonald (Chair), Al Powell, Mike Sissenwine, Jean Snider, Louis Uccellini, Julian Wang, Sean White.

Minutes

The meeting was chaired and opened by Alexander (Sandy) MacDonald. He made general comments on the TOR development, and announced that Richard Rosen, the Assistant Administrator for NOAA Research and Chair of the NOAA Research Council, would come to join the meeting before noon, talk to PSTT members, and offer his purview on scopes and outcomes of the PSTT. He also summarized the progress of the PSTT since the last meeting on analyzing research and determining criteria for where research should be located. The purposes of this meeting were to assign a task to each LO representative to do a survey in his/her own LO on research, Development, Demonstration and Test program/project activities. This survey would focus on NOAA in-house non-biology related research activities and associated resources.

After the introduction, Sandy opened the floor discussion. The group discussions started with NOAA's possible membership to Industrial Research Institute, a commercial entity interested in the research process but have no government links and ties. A cross-walk with iETT/eETT progresses and activities was discussed and re-emphasized. A great amount of time was devoted on discussions and clarifications of several issues: 1) whether PSTT develops only criteria for research location or recommends also options and steps to implement the criteria; 2) where is the boundary between PSTT and iETT/eETT by recognizing the differences of non-bio research and non-eco research; 3) how to coordinate with the policy being developed by the Transition Research-to-Operation Task Team; and 4) how to handle external balance so the PSTT's potential outcomes would be credible to public and parallel to eETT's recommendations.

The group then focused to discuss the changes to the PSTT TOR, and to develop the PSTT related points/questions for Rosen's visits. A few questions were listed as (but not limited to): how do the PSTT focus? How do the PSTT outcomes deliver? Who's looking at overall success to achieve an integrated approach, outcome? What does RRT mean by criteria? and what does it constitute good criteria?

Rosen arrived at 11:36AM. His debrief and discussion with the PSTT group emphasized: 1) RRT was struck by differences to explain why research is all over NOAA; 2) RRT disagreed with the motion of disbanding and distributing OAR because putting research in operations will suffer in the budgets and favor short term research only; 3) RRT recognized that NOAA research is non-centralized and non-distributed and also covers a wide spectrum from applied, development to basic, therefore questioning "how did you

decide to put it there”; 4) therefore, the PSTT’s charge will be where NOAA research should be located and how NOAA research should be organized.

The afternoon discussion focused on brainstorming for criteria where research should be located. A few categories were listed as (but not limited to): 1) timescale during which the Research/Development/Demonstration/Test comes to fruition; 2) risk of difficulty or likelihood that activities will contribute to NOAA mission; 3) infrastructure intensity, which might be one of reasons why concerned about where research is located; 4) the uniqueness of research activity; and 5) continuity. Other criteria elements were also discussed, such as, quality, efficiency, applications including relevance and responsiveness, nature of the hand off, nature of partnership, being “honest broker”, public safety, proximity or collocation of activities leads to better outcome, and dissemination of knowledge.

Towards end of the meeting, the group exchanged ideas on future PSTT activities, who to talk to, and how do we interact with outside. The team schedule and team members’ assignments were also discussed. The group agreed on to invite a few experts from outside of NOAA to be interviewed during consequent PSTT meetings, and a template for the LO survey would be developed.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.